19 ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR SUCCESS NOT TAUGHT IN SCHOOL



AUTONOMY

01 The Definition of Integrity



Kara
Shepard-Poat

Integrity is doing what you said you would do, by the time you said you would do it. This is a skill or trait that can make or break your working relationships, and it is one that requires self-discipline to practice. Scheduling, setting reminders, and active communication all play a vital role in keeping integrity intact.

While integrity is the ideal, it is also always in flux. It is dependent on how self-reliant you are. Sometimes there are things that need renegotiating. New information comes in which may mean a change in the deadline or a whole new plan altogether. Or life situations come up that require rescheduling.

Communication is key. If you have a missed meeting once in a while, that may not be a big deal. If it is consistent, this may be what is holding you back from success. If you can learn to communicate and renegotiate in these times, accountability is maintained and your integrity stays intact.





02 The Value of Integrity in all Aspects of Life



Djendy Denot

It is not enough to simply understand the primary principle of Integrity (see #1) – you have to embody it. Think about the most reliable person you know. This person comes through when they say they will, and clearly communicates if problems arise. They present themselves as organized, calm and collected. If they wanted to, they seem like they could move mountains. Why? Because they actively practice this essential skill.

Integrity is your hidden superpower. To unleash it requires willingness and a commitment to put it into practice. When you do, your business will attract more customers because you are reliable, your family bonds will strengthen because you show up when you say you will, and your relationships will flourish because you always strive to keep your word.

The possibilities are endless when you wield the power of Integrity. Without this fundamental skill, the rest of this guide will be that much more challenging to put into practice, so start today. Grab your calendar and start scheduling your success now.



03 How to Adopt and Maintain an Attitude of Gratitude



Laurence Driggs

Gratitude lies in being able to get up every day and feel glad to be alive. Adopting this attitude starts by learning to recognize and take stock of all the things that keep you going. Be thankful for the people around you, be grateful for your health, and cherish every step on your journey.

If this is a challenge, you might benefit from reading about people that have gone through tougher times than you. An Attitude of Gratitude serves as your mental immune system, fortifying you against feelings of self-pity that are corrosive to self-esteem and inhibit you from realizing your true potential.

Understand, when you run into obstacles, that these snags along the way are more akin to tiny pebbles in an ocean than to giant boulders in a creek. The power to determine the size of that impediment lies within your own mind.

By adopting an Attitude of Gratitude, you will develop more resiliency, increase productivity, maintain more balance, poise, and composure - and experience more fulfillment in all areas of your life.





04 How to Create and Maintain a Culture of Excellence



Richard Grove

Following the concept of integrity, that habit – *demonstrated consistently over time* – builds trust (in and of yourself, and amidst/among others).

Within this framework, a Culture of Excellence is attained/retained/maintained via trust, critical thinking, cogent communication, and diligent adherence to the overall goal and specific next steps to make progress towards that goal.

A Culture of Excellence is a self-imposed environment where excuses are challenged, obstacles are overcome on a regular basis, and focus is maintained by saying "no" to the hundreds of other things you could be doing/thinking about at any given time.

A Culture of Excellence operates on the desired output – *being excellent to each other* – so that we can perform at the highest level as possible and do more than we could do alone; it creates an optimized environment for meaningful and substantial progress to emerge, and for high-value problems to be solved.



05 The Influence of a "No Excuses" Attitude


Gus Visco

Not all excuses are inexcusable. Most people will forgive you for missing the big meeting because you were sidetracked rescuing kittens from a burning building –not everyone, but most.

A *No Excuses Attitude*, however, is less about the *No Excuses*, and more about the *Attitude*. Mastering this attitude enables you to achieve goals at a level you previously believed impossible. Can you rescue the kittens and still make the meeting on time? Without a No Excuses Attitude, you'll never know.

It's not realistic to expect to master this attitude overnight. Simply becoming aware of when we are making excuses is difficult because they are often the result of subconscious influences. Be mindful of your excuses and keep count. You might find that simply doing the thing you said you'd do is easier than defending your excuse for not doing it.

Embracing a No Excuses Attitude will strengthen your character, resulting in greater and more frequent breakthroughs. You can set and achieve goals, or you can make excuses, but you can't do both. The choice is yours.



06 The Power of Learning Public Speaking



Doug Maly

The ability to speak knowledgeably and articulately is one of the most powerful skills you can develop and improve.

If you are new to public speaking, it is time to leave your comfort zone and learn this game-changing skill. If you consider yourself a natural communicator, improving your speaking abilities will lead the way to new opportunities and exponential growth.

Those of us programmed in public schools learned to keep our heads down and put in just enough effort to get through the next test. To be autonomous, you must take real action. Public speaking forces you to collect your thoughts, organize your message, and put it into words. For the entrepreneur, making a name for yourself and selling your ideas is paramount.

Students of Autonomy receive training from experienced professionals and endless opportunities to practice. To hone the skill of public speaking begins with meaningful conversation. Start your conversation now.





07 The Art of Sales


Gus Visco

The art of sales is *the art of providing value*. It's true! Sales begins with problem sourcing. Only by listening and observing can you identify the needs of others. Once you have determined the problem, you can start taking the steps to solve it.

Providing value by sourcing and solving problems – that is the art of sales. It's that simple.

Sales is *not* the art of manipulation. There is no room for pushing or conniving. It's about contributing real value by identifying and solving real problems and getting paid for your honest efforts. If this conflicts with your current definition of sales, then you've been misled.

Sales is a virtuous skill essential for a life of freedom and prosperity. In developing this art, you will also build unwavering confidence in your ability to provide for yourself and your family. It is the single greatest skill you can learn.



08 The Craft of Value-Based Sales


Richard Grove

A lot of people start out in life exchanging their time for money in an hourly pay method, and that's a great start – but it's a phase – and without knowing the possibility of going beyond hourly pay (aka the "paycheck mentality"), many will never outgrow that mentality to refine their skills to a point where they can go to the next phase.

"Value-Based Sales" is where you're able to charge for the value of the outcome achieved. The taking-on of this additional self-responsibility benefits the client/customer as well as pays you in excess of what you could charge in terms of hours. It's the solving of high-value problems, and from there realizing part of the value created by that process is its own form of payment which goes beyond trading time for money "hourly".

This is a good place for an example, to help you solidify this perspective. A student in my AUTONOMY course brought up this concept in Q&A recently; he's an American carpenter living in Dubai, and one of his clients resides in the famed Palm Jumeirah artificial archipelago (of islands) in the United Arab Emirates. His client, a wealthy gent with a trophy-wife, had a grand painting for the entrance of his multi-million-dollar home, and they wanted the carpenter to make a frame, matching the jointwork elements of the mansion.

With about $50 of materials and a lot of experience, communication, inquiry, and testing, he delivered the perfect frame – to the great satisfaction of his clients. Charging around 100x the cost of materials and about 10x the time invested, is an investment of his time which is not paralleled by charging "hourly". The level of self-responsibility, leveraging of experience, active inquiry and listening, and overall delivery of excellence is worth far more than if he charged "$1,000 per hour" for his carpentry services.

This is the blending of advanced cognitive skills with real-time, real-life interactions is a high-value skill set, in and of itself; that's why it's referred to as "Value-Based Sales".

09 The Discipline of High-Value Sales



Richard Grove

This is the part where these components start to stack up. The discipline is the habit of doing the opportunity-recognizing scanning in unison with the logical next step, high-value problem solving.

Example: Beth is an AUTONOMY student who lives in Hawaii and has a thriving online business of building and maintaining websites for other businesses. She's a CEO who pays employees and freelancers hourly, and to do that, she engages in the discipline of "High-Value" Sales, which is a value proposition that includes multiple components, some which she satisfies, many which she systematizes and delegates. To grow her business means to systematize more – to chip away at the areas where it might not be her highest and best use of her time – in order to think more strategically about the higher-order or higher-altitude issues of her business. This elevates opportunity to her workforce while rising to the challenge of leadership and creating an environment of self-reliance and self-direction to achieve the project-specific goals on the runway.



10 How to Hire the Right People and Create Leaders



Doug Maly

Ultimately, the goal of hiring someone is to provide more benefits than costs. It's a major commitment. There is payroll, accounting and administrative work, and the cost of training and acclimating a new person to your environment.

Before hiring, consider:

1. Social fit: Would you enjoy sitting next to this person on a long plane ride? The answer better be yes if you choose to hire them.

2. Management fit: The business world has changed. Old school management was all about "command and control." Today we value, in the words of Richard Grove: "No masters, no slaves." You want to identify talent that you can inspire to grow.

3. Leadership material: Ideally, your new talent will be leadership material. Develop leaders early. Cross-pollinate them with seasoned professionals. Inspire their passions and help them succeed.
Autonomous individuals approach these challenges with a foundation of integrity and trust.





11 How to Get 5 Star Reviews... By Setting Expectations



Anna Beld

Today, word-of-mouth is everything. Your customer's full satisfaction is the goal, because, either way they will spread the word!

How do you get 5 stars every time? The answer is simple, follow these 5 steps. You have to go above and beyond every step of the way. Clarity and communication are key!

Things you have to know: Your customer's pain point & your solution to it. Diving in and gathering information from their perspective allows you to understand them better.

Learn how to effectively explain how your solution works. Be confident, encouraging, timely, and open. Follow up after each step of your process, ensuring they feel that they are in good hands.

Brief your team on the goal of the endeavor - and what "done" looks like for the client or customer. Explaining the explicit deliverables to those participating with you in the delivery of the solution goes miles toward bridging the gap to the goal, setting you up to more-readily over-deliver and over-achieve.

Verify deliverables with customer/client *BEFORE* you conclude the project, so that when you do unveil the deliverable(s) you don't have to wonder if it's up to par, or if the client/customer is in a good/favorable mood that day – you're confident that you've hit a homer, and knocked the ball out of the park, well before it gets to the fence.

Ask for a recommendation! When you're confident in a job well done, ask for feedback. This will cement your reputation and give them time to reflect on how great a job you did. Your feedback questions should be designed to make them think of how you excelled in the job followed by a suggestion to share their conclusions on social media.



12 The Obliteration of My Mentality of Scarcity



Doug Maly

The mentality of scarcity surrounds us wherever we go. From newsstands to the daily broadcasts we are forever told that the sky is falling in a multitude of ways. *But is that the truth?*

The truth is that you and only you decide how you will spend the 86,400 seconds gifted to you every morning.

What you need to remember is that human ingenuity transcends the constraints of the material world. It is time to throw off the self-imposed yoke of inadequacy cultivated by our society.

Identify the default mentality of scarcity you were born into. Acclimate yourself to the abundance of nature. Learn to apply your intelligence to create new ingenious ways of gaining an income.

An autonomous individual discovers the tools they need to break out of the mold holding them back from success. Find your tools and put them into action.





13 How to Transform "I can't do that" into "How can I do that?"



Doug Maly

"I don't have the skills." "I wouldn't know where to start." "I can't do that, I'll just fail."

Have you ever said those things? We have all been there. Even accomplished experts had to begin with nothing. They have had the same thoughts. Except for "I can't"

The "I can't do that" attitude is deeply rooted in our society. We are told to leave every aspect of our lives over to the experts and keep our place. With the "I can't" attitude it is easy to prove yourself right. It may feel safer to stay small- but staying small ultimately leads to unhappiness.

"Learned helplessness might just be the most debilitating habit which results from schooling." -Richard Grove

An autonomous individual will use their strengths to lead them to a life well-lived. They know how to break out of the mold designed by society, follow their own path, and succeed on their own terms.



14 The Brilliance of Effective Delegation



Doug Maly

Success is a team sport. Cultivate the right team and you can delegate.

Starting at the bottom, one punches the clock or works for a salary check. To become autonomous you must learn new skills. More importantly, you must first identify *high value* skills.

However, even with a lucrative skillset and full-time dedication, one person can only go so far.

To go next level, systematize your success. Here's how.

In the words of Richard Grove, "Convert your time into assets which leverage your efforts. Avoid spending time on liabilities." Don't expect success from easy-button solutions or get-rich-quick schemes. Deliver results with proven, step by step methods.





14 The Brilliance of Effective Delegation Continued

Here is a four step process identified by Robert Kiyosaki, author of Rich Dad, Poor Dad:

1. Employee: you have a job
2. Self Employed: you own a job
3. Business Owner: you own a system that works for YOU
4. Investor: money works for YOU

With a lucrative skillset, the ultimate goal of autonomy is investment income. This is how you gain freedom to spend time as you wish.

How to delegate? Follow the Pareto Principle. To paraphrase, "20% of your time generates 80% of your income."

First, know thyself and identify the 20% of your efforts that are most productive. Then apply division of labor and recruit members of your team or external resources capable of taking on appropriate tasks. Also, consider machine learning, IFTTTs, or answer bots. Delegate low-value work, such as reading and responding to emails. Then spend more of your time on high-value skills or leisure, as you see fit for the greatest quality of life. **Time is one non-renewable resource that you control. Delegation is a lever to force-multiply your time.**



15 How to Make and Smash Goals


Anna Beld

A great goal is one that is specific, attainable, and easily measured in a set amount of time, like one week. Your goal needs to be relevant to where you are and realistic enough to accomplish **without making excuses**.

Next comes the hard part: smashing goals. Like many of the other skills on this list, following through with your goals is a **learned discipline**, a muscle you can grow and exercise with practice!

To smash a goal, **put a method in place** to ensure that you follow through – whether it's reminders on your phone, rewards at the end of a successful week, or however you can stay accountable! Smashing goals is a combination of **conscious effort** and **physical action**. Train yourself to listen to the reminder you set and figure out ways you can make your goals easier on yourself – like doing 10 pushups a day for 5 days, instead of doing 50 pushups in one day.

Achieving your small scale goals will give you the ability to also achieve your larger scale goals. Practice makes perfect!





16 How to Keep Your Employees Happy



Kara Shepard-Poat

"Happiness is not what happens to you, but rather, how you thoughtfully respond to what happens through you." - Richard Grove

If you plan on having employees or managing freelancers, this is an essential skill to have. When employees are stressed out, self-confidence goes down and distraction goes up. Progress slows, communication suffers, and the quality of work deteriorates.

Happy team members are inspired to think outside the box and take calculated risks to come up with creative solutions. They are not afraid to make mistakes – *they learn from them*.

Happiness breeds loyalty. Loyal employees generate higher engagement and become excellent role models for their fellow workers. Creating an environment that inspires employees to take joy in their work will not only boost morale, it will also have a tremendous effect on the overall success of your business.

How do you do this? By leading by example and putting all the preceding skills into action.

Maintain your integrity, present an attitude of gratitude, and adopt a can-do mentality. These mindsets create a profound ripple effect. Practice these and you will quickly see a culture of excellence emerge in your employees.





17 How to Be Accountable to My Coach, Mentor, Clients, and Family



Laurence Driggs

If you can discipline yourself to be accountable to the people around you it's going to be an asset in your life and in the lives of those you interact with. Maintaining accountability involves striking a delicate balance of all of these skills, along with timely communication and a strong desire to improve yourself. It requires attention to detail and a nurturing approach, much like caring for seeds and helping them along the journey to blossoming into a garden.

A basic blueprint for holding yourself accountable and staying on a path to success might include the following:

Clearly articulating your goals and putting them in writing

Searching for and finding the knowledge you require to accomplish your goals

Being brutally honest with yourself and staying grounded in objective reality

And actively seeking feedback so you consistently continue to learn and improve.

Accountability is often preached but less often practiced. By putting your accountability into action with those around you, your work/progress will improve, your relationships will strengthen, and your success will quickly blossom.



18 How to Keep it Real


Djendy Denot

You are acquiring new skills every day. It's exciting, empowering, and, frankly, can be quite frustrating at times. There are highs and there are lows. Some days you improve a lot and some days you can't seem to budge.

As you gain new levels of proficiency, it can be tempting to fall into the mind trap of, "I know it all." Know this is your ego talking, not your knowledge. Learning is a lifelong endeavor. Aristotle said, *"The more you know, the more you know you don't know."*

Keep it real and assess yourself truthfully.

Your time is not to be gambled with. There is only so much information you have access to, and only so much you can process at one time. Don't just throw everything at the wall to see what sticks. Take the time to sit down and methodically think about how to effectively invest your seconds, minutes, weeks, years, and decades of your life.



19 How to Consistently Add Value to the Lives of Others



Anna Beld

Throughout life, we are often gifted with the opportunity to give without asking for something back – sharing knowledge, skills, and our time with those around us without keeping score.

Adding value consists of your intention – enriching your relationships by giving **focus** in conversations, **effort** in timely responses, and thoughtful **knowledge** to help others grow.

Giving focus in your conversations helps others to feel valued, cared about, and taken seriously. Responding clearly and in good time shows the other that you desire the best for them and that they are a priority in your life – not just an afterthought, not half-assed. Remember, the gift of full attention is rare in this day and age.

Using your knowledge and perspective to give the other person tangible advice, necessary caution, or recommended action shows them that they are worthy of your energy & thoughtfulness. You are contributing to their life & adding value through standing apart from the crowd & being deliberate with your time – *and theirs!*







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